

REMARKS

In the Advisory Action mailed March 30, 2006, referring to the final rejection of claims, the Examiner states that the Neogi reference was

... used only to teach that bleaching elevates whiteness and that the addition of small amounts of blue colorant to improve whiteness appearance is known in papermaking. The use of bleaching to elevate whiteness is well known and would be obvious to one skilled in the art. Addition of blue dye to pulp to offset yellowness is also well known in the industry and would be obvious to one skilled in the art.

The Neogi reference states that "[w]hile bleaching directly elevates brightness, it only indirectly elevates whiteness." See Neogi at [0003]. The Neogi reference goes on to state that

... bleaching is not always the most efficient method for boosting product whiteness. For example, even after aggressive bleaching, a product's whiteness can always be extended beyond that achievable with bleaching alone by judicious addition of colorant.

[0004] The addition of small amounts of blue colorant to improve whiteness appearance is known in other fields, such as papermaking. However, the practice is unknown to the fluff pulp community. The addition of colorant to fluff pulp to improve its whiteness properties is novel to the industry.

First, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.131, the Declaration of Kathy A. Welch removes the Neogi reference and its teachings. Applicants submit that without the Neogi reference, the *prima facie* case of obviousness fails.

The Neogi reference makes clear that bleaching directly elevates brightness, but only indirectly elevates whiteness. The Neogi reference states that whiteness can be improved beyond that achievable with bleaching by the addition of colorant. Applicants respectfully submit that, without the Neogi reference, there is no teaching or suggestion to combine bleaching with a colorant, as in the claimed invention.

Furthermore, although the addition of colorant is known in papermaking, the Neogi reference makes clear that the addition of colorant to fluff pulp to improve whiteness is novel.

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS^{LLC}
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

Furthermore, although the addition of colorant is known in papermaking, the Neogi reference makes clear that the addition of colorant to fluff pulp to improve whiteness is novel. Thus, contrary to the Examiner's statement, the addition of blue dye to pulp to offset yellowness is not well known in the industry. Because the addition of colorant to fluff pulp to improve whiteness is novel and is not well known, applicants respectfully submit that the addition of blue dye to pulp to offset yellowness would not be obvious to one skilled in the art.

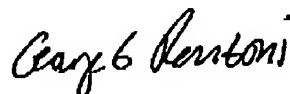
Because there is no teaching or suggestion to combine bleaching with a colorant, and because the addition of a colorant to pulp is novel and also nonobvious, applicants believe that the claimed invention is patentable in view of the cited references.

CONCLUSION

In view of the previously filed Response, the Declaration of Kathy A. Welch, and the foregoing remarks, applicants believe that Claims 1-19 are in condition for allowance. If any issues remain that may be expeditiously addressed in a telephone interview, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone applicants' attorney at 206.695.1755.

Respectfully submitted,

CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR
JOHNSON KINDNESS^{MLC}



George E. Renzoni, Ph.D.
Registration No. 37,919
Direct Dial No. 206.695.1755

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via facsimile to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Group Art Unit 1731, Examiner D.R. Cordray, at facsimile number 571-278-8300 on April 6, 2006.

Date: April 6, 2006

G&R:mmm

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS^{MLC}
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100